

- (vi) The provisions of "EXIM POLICY" relating to import of vessels has been amended *w.e.f.* 1.4.2001 bringing all category of vessels/ships under OGL and thereby dispensing with licence requirement for import of various kinds ships. Ships could now be imported freely without licence.
- (vii) The Depreciation rate on ships has been enhanced from 20% to 25% *w.e.f.* 1.4.2001, thereby facilitating faster tonnage replacement.
- (viii) 100% Foreign Direct Investment in Shipping Sector is permitted.

Due to facilitative steps taken by the Government as mentioned above, the Shipping Companies have been able to acquire 115 Ships of various types, which include 33 new built vessels during the period 1.4.97 to 31.3.2001. Further, The Shipping Corporation of India has already placed orders for 8 new vessels and has proposals to acquire more vessels during this year.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Priority is being accorded to modernisation and diversification of Indian fleet. It is a continuous process. SCI, a Public Sector Shipping Company, has a diversified fleet of 100 vessels/ships. It has also forayed into LNG transportation arena by entering into joint ventures for LNG vessels.

Expansion of Inland Waterways

1624. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government are contemplating to extend the length of the Inland Waterways to reduce the increasing pressure on the other means of transport;
- (b) if so, whether techno-economic feasibility studies have been conducted on several waterways identified for undertaking such expansion;
- (c) if so, the names of the waterways including the National Waterways which are being developed for shipping and navigation; and
- (d) by when these Inland Waterways are likely to be functional?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir:

(b) Yes, Sir.

- (c) Three waterways have been declared as national waterways. These are as under: National Waterway No. 1—Allahabad-Haldia stretch (1620 Km) of Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly river System.

National Waterway No. 2—Dhubri-Sadiya stretch (891 Km) of river Brahmaputra.

National Waterway No. 3—Kollam-Kottapuram stretch of West Coast Canal alongwith Champakara and Udyogmandal Canals (205 Km).

Techno-economic feasibility studies for assessing the potential/ navigability of the following waterways have been conducted.

1. The Sunderbans.
2. The Barak River
3. Kakinada-Mercaunam canal integrated with rivers Krishna and Godavari
4. East Coast Canal integrated with Brahmani river
5. DVC Canal
6. Extension of NW-3 upto Kovalam in the South and Kasargode in the North.

(d) Government long term objective is to develop all potential waterways for navigation and shipping to promote trade and commerce. However, they will need to have prioritization and phasing. This will, *inter alia*, depend on availability of resources.

Damage to docks by storm

1625. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the recent storm in the country has caused damage to the docks;

(b) whether it is also a fact that due to this damage ships are not able to go into the sea; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) No. Sir. However, the western leaf of the storm gate of Indira Dock entrance lock of Mumbai Port was uprooted and collapsed into the sea on 24.5.2001 due to the prevailing cyclonic conditions. Out of 11 vessels inside the basin on 24.5.2001, 7 vessels sailed out by 30.5.2001 and the remaining sailed out by 4.6.2001.